

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 222

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to stabilize the amount of the medicare part B premium.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 31, 2005

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. DAYTON, and Mr. CORZINE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to stabilize the amount of the medicare part B premium.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Keep the Promise of
5 Medicare Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. STABILIZATION OF MEDICARE PART B PREMIUM.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds the following:

1 (1) The 2005 Medicare part B premium is 17.5
2 percent higher than the 2004 Medicare part B pre-
3 mium.

4 (2) Medicare part B premiums have increased
5 nearly 45 percent over the last 4 years.

6 (3) The increase in the 2005 Medicare part B
7 premium is the largest dollar increase in Medicare's
8 history and the largest percentage increase in more
9 than a decade.

10 (4) The increase in the 2005 Medicare part B
11 premium increases annual costs for each Medicare
12 beneficiary by almost \$140.

13 (5) The 2005 Social Security COLA increased
14 only 2.7 percent.

15 (6) An average retiree with a Social Security
16 benefit of \$914 will spend 47 percent of his or her
17 2005 Social Security COLA on the increase in the
18 2005 Medicare part B premium.

19 (7) 2,100,000 Medicare beneficiaries nationwide
20 have had their entire 2005 Social Security COLA
21 consumed by the increase in the 2005 Medicare part
22 B premium.

23 (8) Almost 13,000,000 Medicare beneficiaries
24 will have over 50 percent of their 2005 Social Secu-

1 rity COLA consumed by the increase in the 2005
2 Medicare part B premium.

3 (9) The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improve-
4 ment, and Modernization Act of 2003 directly con-
5 tributed to the increase in the 2005 Medicare part
6 B premium by including provisions to privatize the
7 Medicare program, making the program less effi-
8 cient.

9 (10) The Medicare expenses that beneficiaries
10 must pay will increase from 37 percent of a bene-
11 ficiary's Social Security check in 2006 to nearly 50
12 percent in 2021.

13 (b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the
14 Senate that Congress should enact legislation to protect
15 Medicare beneficiaries from dramatic increases in the
16 Medicare part B premium.

17 (c) STABILIZATION.—Section 1839(a)(3) of the So-
18 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395r(a)(3)) is amended by
19 adding at the end the following new sentence: “Notwith-
20 standing the preceding sentences, the monthly premium
21 rate determined under this paragraph for each month in
22 2005 may not exceed an amount equal to the monthly pre-
23 mium rate determined under this paragraph for each
24 month in 2004 adjusted by the percentage change in the
25 average Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners

1 and Clerical Workers (CPI–W) for the third quarter of
2 2003 to the third quarter of 2004.”.

